

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 15-16, 19-33, 36-38, and 40-41 were pending and presented for examination. In an Office Action dated August 1, 2007, all pending claims were rejected. Applicants thank the Examiner for examination of the claims pending in this application and address the Examiner's comments below.

Applicants are canceling claims 2 and 21 and amending claims 1, 3-9, 19-20, 24-29 and 36 with this Amendment and Response.

In view of the Amendments herein and the Remarks that follow, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections, and withdraw them.

Substance of the Interview

Applicants thank the Examiner and the Examiner's Supervisor for their time in conducting a telephone interview on October 17, 2007. During the telephone interview, Applicants' attorney, the Examiner, and the Examiner's Supervisor discussed an overview of claim 1. The Examiner and the Examiner's Supervisor expressed concerns about the clarity of claim 1 and offered suggestions to address the issue. Applicants have taken the suggestions of the Examiner and the Examiner's Supervisor into account while preparing the Amendment herein to clarify the claims. For example, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite "automatically creating an implicit query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight" to clarify that the implicit query is automatically created without the user explicitly entering a query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight.

Response to Rejections Under 35 USC 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-13, 15-16, 19-33, 36-38, and 40-41 under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,007,085 (“Malik”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,112,203 (“Bharat”).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite “responsive to determining the weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities, automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.” These features of the claimed invention are beneficial because the implicit search query that is automatically created responsive to determining the weight to associate with the plurality of named entities is based on the weighted named entities themselves. The aspect of weighting named entities allows the query system to focus on terms of potentially greater interest to the user.

Malik discloses methods allowing users to obtain information correlated or corresponding to a communication by logging the event in a message log and providing information related to the event to the user based on the user’s preferred method of communication for example via a instant message or a chat room message. (Malik, col. 9, ln. 10-40). Malik fails to disclose or suggest “responsive to determining the weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities, automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.” Malik discloses aiding in finding information and resources, but Malik does not disclose or suggest determining weights to associate with

named entities. Therefore, Malik does not disclose or suggest creating an implicit search query...focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight to locate information.

Bharat does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik. Bharat discloses a method for ranking a set of documents. There is no disclosure or suggestion in Bharat of “responsive to determining the weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities, automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.” In Bharat, term frequency weighting is applied to determine relevance weights that measure the similarity between a query topic and pages within a result set that were returned as the result of a query. (Bharat, col. 5, ln. 21-23). Bharat discloses the determined relevancy weights of the pages are used to prune the pages from a graph that will be used to rank the remaining documents if the weights fall below a threshold. (Bharat, col. 7, ln. 10-39). Therefore, there is no suggestion or teaching in Bharat of automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, nor any suggestion or teaching of the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight, as recited in claim 1. In Bharat, the relevance weights are determined after a result set has been provided in response to a query in contrast to the claimed invention where the determination of weights to associate with each of the plurality of named entities occurs prior to the implicit query being created which focuses on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. Thus,

Bharat does not remedy the deficiencies of of Malik. Therefore, Applicants submit claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Malik and Bharat either alone or in combination at least for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 19, 20 and 36 similarly recite “responsive to determining the weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities, automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.” All arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 apply equally to claims 19, 20 and 36. Therefore, Applicants submit claims 19, 20 and 36 are patentable over the combination of Malik and Bharat either alone and in combination at least for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 2 and 21 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection of claim 2 and 21 is moot.

As claims 3-7, 10-11, 15, 22-27, 30, 37-38 and 40-41 depend either directly or indirectly from the patentable independent claims 1, 20 or 36 discussed above, all arguments advanced above with respect to independent claims are hereby incorporated so as to apply to these dependent claims as well. In addition, claims 3-7, 10-11, 15, 22-27, 30, 37-38 and 40-41 recite other patentable features which further distinguish them from the prior art of record. Applicants submit that dependent claims 3-7, 10-11, 15, 22-27, 30, 37-38 and 40-41 are patentable over the prior art of record by reason of their dependency, in addition to the further patentable limitations recited herein.

Based on the above amendment and the remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that for at least these reasons claims 1, 3-13, 15-16, 19-20, 22-33, and 36-41 are patentably

distinguishable over the cited references, both alone and in combination. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner reconsider the rejection, and withdraw it.

The Examiner rejected claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over a combination of Malik and Bharat in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,961,954 to Maybury et al. ("Maybury"). This rejection is traversed.

Maybury does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik and Bharat. Namely, none of these references disclose or suggest at least the feature of responsive to determining the weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities, automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. Maybury discloses searching for the most popular named entities in news stories. The user can navigate to related stories by clicking on data points on a graph of the frequency of named entities versus date. (Maybury, col. 16, ln. 48-61). Maybury does not disclose or suggest responsive to determining the weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities automatically creating an implicit search query based at least in part on the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, nor does Maybury disclose or suggest that the implicit search query be focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. Thus, Maybury does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik and Bharat. Therefore, Applicants submit that all of the independent claims, 1, 19, 20, and 36 are patentable over the combination of Malik, Bharat, and Maybury at least for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 12 and 32 recites “identifying a plurality of named entities for a name by using first name only, last name only, and combinations thereof.” For example, a named entity such as John Doe is identified either by John, Doe, John Doe or Doe John. Maybury does not disclose “identifying a plurality of named entities for a name by using first name only, last name only, and combinations thereof.” Maybury discloses it is possible “to provide a more tailored presentation, for example, searching for people, show only person named entities and key frames that include faces.” (As noted by the Examiner, Maybury, col. 18, ln. 4-9). Therefore, Maybury does not disclose using first name only, last name only, and combinations thereof to identify a plurality of named entities. Maybury merely discloses searching for people and only displaying named entities and key frames that include faces. Malik and Bharat also do not disclose, “identifying a plurality of named entities for a name by using first name only, last name only, and combinations thereof” nor does the Examiner suggest that they do. Therefore, at least for these reasons, Applicants submit that these claims are patentable over Malik in view of Bharat and further in view of Maybury.

Claims 16 and 31 recites “receiving an interest signal associated with one of the plurality of named entities and ranking the result set based at least in part on the interest signal.” For example, an interest signal can comprise click-through behavior within the content display window to determine results which the user exhibits particular interest and uses the information to rank the result set. Maybury does not disclose “receiving an interest signal associated with one of the plurality of named entities and ranking the result set based at least in part on the interest signal.” Maybury discloses “a user may also specify particular broadcast news agencies and time periods they are interested in searching via a graphical interface...the system 10 will then generate a list of stories from the broadcasts during these

dates.” (As noted by the Examiner, col. 16, ln. 62-67). Therefore, Maybury does not use an interest signal associated with one of the plurality of named entities and ranking the result set based at least in part on the interest signal. Maybury simply generates a list of stories based on the user’s specification of broadcast news agencies and time periods they are interested in. Malik and Bharat also do not disclose, “receiving an interest signal associated with one of the plurality of named entities and ranking the result set based at least in part on the interest signal” nor does the Examiner suggest that they do. Therefore, at least for these reasons, Applicants submit that these claims are patentable over Malik in view of Bharat and further in view of Maybury.

As claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 depend either directly or indirectly from the patentable independent claims 1 or 20 discussed above, all arguments advanced above with respect to independent claims are hereby incorporated so as to apply to these dependent claims as well. In addition, claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 recite other patentable features which further distinguish them from the prior art of record. Applicants submit that dependent claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 are patentable over the prior art of record by reason of their dependency, in addition to the further patentable limitations recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner reconsider the rejection, and withdraw it.

Conclusion

In sum, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims presented herein are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants’ representative at the number provided below if the Examiner believes it will help expedite furtherance of this application.

Respectfully Submitted,
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